

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

No. 114.

THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 1854.

{ PRICE 1d.
STAMPED 2d.



LITTLE JOE'S DISHONEST CLAIMS UPON THE STOCKMEN REPUDIATED.

FRANK LAYTON: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

CHAPTER XVII.

A CONFERENCE WITH NO SATISFACTORY RESULTS.

WITH our reader's permission we once more shift our scene. It was night, gloomy and gusty, and

No. 114. 1854.

over a long stretch of irregular ground trotted softly a sure-footed nag. A saddle was on his back, and a rider on the saddle; and between the horse and horseman there seemed to be a tolerably good understanding—"Keep your seat, and I'll

keep my feet." "Keep your feet, and I'll keep my seat." It was a mutual compact, tacitly entered into, but not the less binding.

The ground was irregular, we said; as for road, there was none; and the rider seemed to be feeling his way cautiously. Probably there were landmarks visible to his keen eye in spite of the murky atmosphere, though none but an experienced bushman would have discovered them. As to the horse, he yielded himself to the rider's guidance. For some distance the country was open, and beneath the horse's feet was soft turf. Then horse and rider were buried in the darkened gloom of the bush. Then a rocky valley had to be traversed, and a steep hill surmounted. No sounds but the jarring notes of night birds were to be heard; and the man rode on silently.

Presently he halted by the side of a narrow water-course. The channel was dry, except where at intervals it deepened into the water-holes characteristic of the beds of Australian streams. The horseman now crossed the channel, followed its windings, proceeding at a more rapid pace, and at length again halted, and uttered a loud, prolonged "coo-eh."

At that same hour, in a hut of somewhat superior dimensions, but which we need not more particularly describe than as harbouring a rather more than average quantity of filth, sat the two men, Morris and M'Weevil. They were at home, and around the hut might have been seen, daylight permitting, the appurtenances of a small but apparently flourishing cattle-farm. The stock-yard and stockman's hut were at some distance from this home-building; and nearer at hand were a convenient stable, a milking pen, a dairy, and a small storehouse. The run was compact, well-watered, and secure.

The two men were in no very gay humour. Some difference of opinion had probably led to angry disputation, which had risen to a considerable height, when a distant "coo-eh" fell upon their ears, and startled a large dog from his slumbers by the hearth to noisy watchfulness. Hastening to the door of the hut, one of the men returned the signal. Soon afterwards, the horseman of whom we have spoken rapidly approached, alighted carefully and slowly, led his horse into the stable, and then, entering the hut, the door was shut. We shall, however, venture to reveal so much of the conference as is needful for our purpose, omitting the superfluities of language with which it was garnished; and translating the remainder, where needful, from thieves' Latin—which is not unknown or unstudied even in Australia—into decent and comprehensible English.

"So, what has brought you here?" was the first salutation of Morris to the visitor.

"One of the chap's horses," replied the man, sullenly. "What do you think did, else?"

"Bah! we know that; but you seem out of humour, my man."

"Like enough, you would be if you had been laid up with broken ribs a couple of months or thereabouts, and then kept bumping on horseback a matter of ten miles, on a dark night like this, with the bones grinding together at every step over the ground, up hill and down."

"Why!" said one of the stock-owners, with a

loud laugh, "what a baby you must have been to get thrown as you did. I thought you knew how to keep your seat better. You will say next that it was our fault you got that tumble."

"Well, and wasn't it, Mr. M'Weevil? If it hadn't been that my head was spinning with your——"

"Out with the bottle, Morris," said the other, still laughing. "Little Joe has had so much water-gruel lately that he has turned sour. There, put some life into you, man; and then you can tell us what you have got to say."

"I have heard," said the man thus addressed, and still sulkily, "of some people's laughing being like the crackling of thorns somewhere, Mr. M'Weevil." But he did not refuse the proffered draught, which he tossed down with evident satisfaction, and then drew himself nearer to the fire.

"Toss on another log or two, Mac," said Morris to his partner. "'Poor Tom's a-cold.' And now, Joe, out with it, man. You didn't come here to-night to lecture us, I guess. There's something more at the bottom."

"I am just come to say, then," said Mr. Bracy's ex-stockman, whom our readers will have recognized, "that you had best look out for squalls—that's all."

"Whereaway?" asked Mr. Morris, with a look of indifference, real or pretended.

"Whereaway! Why, you don't mean to say that you don't know what's been going on at Hunter's Creek lately."

"Perhaps we do, and perhaps not; but say we do, and what is that to us, my man? You must speak out plain if you want such innocents as we are to take your meaning—eh, Mac?"

"To be sure," replied M'Weevil, with a scornful laugh. The two men were evidently playing with their tool, in spite of the wise proverb which tells us not to play with edged tools. Probably they believed that the edge in this case was not dangerously sharp. Little Joe saw the drift of his hosts, and he waxed more angry. It may be, however, that he thought within himself that quarrelling would do more harm than good; for after a fierce look at each of the men, he went on in a more quiet tone.

"It was an uncommon stupid thing of you, Mr. Morris, to go on at the station that night as you did, when I wasn't there to see all right. You know what sort of stuff Tom Price is made of; but you didn't know the other chaps. I tell you that that Frank Layton is a notch above our sort of game."

"Why, you owl; mayn't a man go and see his neighbours in the bush?" asked Mr. Morris. "However, I should not have turned out that night if I had known what had come to you. But how was I to have found that out? You should have sent a letter by post, Joe."

"Stuff!" exclaimed the man, impatiently. "How was I to let you know when I was half dead, and boxed up safe at Hunter's Creek? But you might have drawn off when you found how it was, and then there would have been no harm done."

"Harm! And I should like you, little Joe, to tell me what harm was done," said Mr. Morris, looking the ex-stockman steadily in the face. "If the fellows chose to drink more than was good for

them, what had I to do with it? There's no law against a man's offering another a glass of grog, I suppose, if so be it is in another man's shanty, even?"

"No, Mr. Morris," retorted the man, and returning the gaze; "but there is a law against driving that other man's stock off his run, and hiding them up in a gully. I reckon there is, leastways. So there!"

"I say, mate, none of your insinuations," exclaimed Mr. M'Weevil, fiercely, while his partner only laughed in derision—"No doubt there is, little Joe; and what then?" he said.

"Oh, if that's it, you can tell better than I. But I suppose you have heard that Mr. Bracy, Mr. Irving, and the raw hand, along with Dick Brown, did take a start nor-rard, and did find some *strayed*" (this word spoken with a covert sneer) "cattle of Mr. Bracy's in an uncommon snug bit of a place in the mountains; I don't know how far off, nor where, not I, and don't want to; but I do suppose you may have heard of this, Mr. Morris; and how they had been driven off the run when you was drinking in the hut; and how—"

"There, that'll do," replied Morris, with apparent unconcern. "Oh, yes, I heard something of the sort, I believe; but had almost forgotten it. It was no business of mine, you know."

Little Joe extended his eyes into a broad stare of astonishment. "That's a good one, however," said he, when words came to his aid.

"To be sure it is," continued Morris, in the same indifferent tone. "Why, you know, if I was having a friendly chat with Tom Price in his hut, how should I know what was doing in the run? It stands to reason, doesn't it, that I couldn't have known anything about it? Ask M'Weevil, now, what he thinks."

"And of course, Mr. M'Weevil didn't know nothing about it neither! Where was he that night?" asked little Joe, in a suppressed rage.

"Really," said the man thus appealed to, "it is so long ago, and I have been pretty busy of late at home, looking after the stock and so forth, that it is not to be expected I should remember."

"And you don't remember, ne'er a one of you, I suppose, what we talked about the last time I was here?" continued the bushman.

"A good many things, I dare say," said Morris; "but come, Joe, there's enough of this. Let us know what you did come for. Tell us the news, man, and take another spell at the can; there's more where that came from;" and he pushed towards the bushman the materials for mixing. In spite of his ill-concealed chagrin, and the warning he had received in his broken bones, the man could not withstand the temptation.

"Tis hard, though," he said, "after a man has done his best to serve his friends, to get the cold shoulder in this sort of way; but never mind; perhaps you don't know, gentlemen, that there has been a good deal of going backwards and forwards between Hunter's Creek and the township over yonder since that affair in the bush."

"Oh, no doubt; a new rig out of mourning from Rob Matson's store for young Irving; and Matson's girl gone over to Hunter's Creek to help to make it up for the women. I have heard all that;

but you didn't ride over this dark night to give us that bit of news, I suppose?"

"Perhaps not, Mr. Morris; and since you know so much, I needn't tell you, may be, that there's a police magistrate at the township, and that he and Mr. Bracy have been laying their heads pretty close together of late?"

"Well?" said Mr. Morris, with a trifle more interest in the question than he had hitherto shown, but not enough to build a suspicion upon, perhaps.

"And I have heard whispers of a warrant, and a visit to this part of the settlement," little Joe continued, with a gleam of malice in his keen grey eye.

"Let 'em come; they're welcome. We don't care that for them, little Joe," said Morris, throwing out his arm and snapping his finger and thumb. "If they find a beef-steak without a true and lawful brand on it they may eat it, that's all. They may chance, however, to have to digest the gridiron afterwards; but that's as they may behave. So, now, have you said your say?"

"Not quite. Mr. Bracy is going to have a branding next week."

"He is, is he? what day?" asked M'Weevil.

"Thursday, they say," said the bushman.

"Very well—that suits. I'll be there, and help."

This was a stretch of imprudence, or impudence, for which the ex-stockman was evidently unprepared. "You, you, Mr. M'Weevil?" he stammered.

"Well; and why not, I should like to know?"

"Oh, you know your own affairs best," said the man; "and I dare say you are in the right of it. But if you mean to be there, I don't—that's all."

"No! you don't say so?" rejoined the other, in affected surprise.

"I do; and mean it. Bracy settled up with me a month ago—that's one good thing; and I shall be off to Melbourne. Any commands there, gentlemen?"

"None, little Joe; though I must say it was kind, now, to come over on purpose to give us the offer. One good turn deserves another; so, fill again, my man," said Mr. Morris, pushing towards him the bottle, now nearly emptied; for though we have touched lightly on this particular, the conversation had been plentifully moistened, while a great cloud of tobacco-smoke had gradually wrapped each speaker in a thick fog.

"I won't have any more of it, Mr. Morris," replied the man. "I don't want another tumble; it wouldn't suit. But as we are not likely to meet again in a hurry, there is a little settlement betwixt us, you know." This was said in a whisper.

"Speak out, man; don't be afraid of your own voice. A settlement, did you say?"

"Yes, a little settlement," little Joe repeated, with becoming humility.

"Do you know anything of a settlement, Mac?" Mr. Morris asked his partner.

"Not I; the man must be dreaming."

Little Joe looked aghast. "Why," he stammered, "you know our agreement when I was here last time. You have not forgotten that, Mr. Morris? you remember it, Mr. M'Weevil? Come, now, it is time I was in the saddle again; so no joking."

The partners declared that they were never

more serious in their lives. A storm of angry and threatening words succeeded, at the close of which the visitor rushed from the hut, boiling with unchecked rage, hastened to the stable, climbed—for he had lost his springiness—on to his horse's back, and rode furiously back by the way he came. The two men, after listening to the retreating sound of the horse's feet until it was lost in the distance, laughed loudly, and re-entered the hut. There was more of bravado than mirth in the laugh, however, and it soon ceased. Guilt is ever the fruitful parent of jealousy and recrimination. Once more by themselves, accordingly, the two men resumed their mutual reproaches, in which they charged upon each other the failure of the act of robbery which had led to the discovery of their secret recess in the mountains, and which threatened them with further danger. But we drop the curtain here, and again shift our scene.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A ROOM AT HUNTER'S CREEK; AND A DIGRESSION, CONTAINING

A HISTORY.

EARLIER on the same evening three young women were busily but mournfully engaged in needle-work. The room in which they were seated was a pleasant chamber in the farm at Hunter's Creek; and its fittings up and furnishing gave evidence that, though far enough from society, the Bracys had not abandoned all pretensions to taste and luxury. Many pretty articles of feminine adornment, and for feminine occupation of leisure hours, were there; and the rightful owners of that snug and comfortable retreat were as far as need be imagined from the rude, rough, clumsy, demi-savage amazons which seem associated in some minds with the denizenship of the bush. No doubt, the young women were active, industrious, hardy, and well-enough versed in all domestic accomplishments, which have even a higher value in an Australian than in an English farm. They were not by any means "fine ladies," but neither were they "booresses."

Mr. Bracy himself was a man of education and of refined habits: his wife had, in her youth, moved in, and perhaps we may add adorned, society at home which would have been dignified by the name of "superior." They married, and were genteelly poor, the worst kind of poverty; and, what is perhaps more galling, they were dependent on richer relations. Mr. Bracy was the younger son of a younger son, and streams of ancestral wealth had descended into other channels; ancestral acres there were none—none at least for him.

Reginald Bracy—we trust our readers will pardon this digression—Reginald Bracy pondered over his disadvantages, tried a scheme or two at home for "bettering his fortune," as he expressed it—in other words, for achieving an honourable independence—but met with small success. Meanwhile he found himself, now that he was married, thrown more completely in the shade than he had ever before been. He held, in fact, an anomalous position in society; being barely tolerated, or at best condescendingly noticed, by those of his own rank but in more favoured circumstances, on the implied and well-understood condition that he kept himself aloof from "the vulgar," by an

association with whom, in trade or commerce, he might have been eventually benefited. His wife felt more keenly than himself this isolation and uneasy dependence, and revolted as much as he did from the patronage with which it was connected. When, therefore, a few years after marriage, and while they were both still young, the husband declared for self-emancipation, and hesitatingly proposed to "try his fortune"—we use his own words—as an emigrant, the wife, instead of opposing obstacles, as he expected, met his proposition, half way at least, with constitutional ardour.

Friends and relations treated the scheme with ridicule. Reginald Bracy and his wife emigrate! He who had never wrought a hard day's work in his life, and she, so delicately nurtured—they emigrate! Live in the woods, and keep cows! horrid idea. Milk them! more horrible still. It was odd enough, that this was the leading idea—the string that was oftenest touched. Nay, it was a kind of Paganini instrument which these good, terribly scandalized folks played: it had but one string. Reginald Bracy and his wife were actually talking of emigrating; they were going to keep cows in Australia—nasty cows, not fit to be touched even with a long pole; and what is more, they would have to milk them!

Mr. Bracy and his wife listened in silence, and then went home, from time to time, to their little cottage-ornée—they were genteel people at that time, you remember, and so we must use genteel words—to study afresh every book on the subject they could obtain; and books on Australia, whatever they are now, were not very plentiful then. At length their plans were matured; their small capital was converted into ready money; and they bade a lasting adieu to England. But not to care and anxiety. Their only child—we forgot to say that they had one—sickened and died on a long and uncomfortable voyage to the home of their adoption. How bitterly they mourned the death of the firstborn, let fellow-mourners tell. The bloom of life had been removed, never to be restored.

On their arrival, Mr. Bracy purchased land; but his first efforts were unsuccessful; and, after years of toil, he found himself in a worse position than at first. Then came a year of terrible drought. Sheep perished by hundreds, and cattle by scores. Then there was a time of fearful depression and almost universal bankruptcy; and the seal seemed to be set on the complete, if not irretrievable, ruin of our immigrants. Mr. Bracy might have sunk in despondency but for his heroic and noble-minded wife; but she, who had been bred to luxury, though not to wealth—she, refined, sensitive, and apparently unfitted by education and early training for rough and stirring exertion, was throughout her husband's helper and encourager. She kept his heart from sinking, pointed hopefully to brighter times, and meanwhile made sacrifices from which many more robust but less determined women would have shrunk, or of which, at any rate, they would have loudly complained. Mrs. Bracy never complained; and eventually, though gradually, her hopes were realized. The harvest time of exertion came.

Mr. Bracy's first failures were mainly the result of inexperience; not of indolence, certainly. Those

who had predicted that the fine gentleman, who, in England, seemed fit for nothing but to spend his time in the desultory pursuits of a reduced country gentleman; whose fittest out-of-door occupation seemed to be that of cultivating flowers in his lady's garden; and whose hardest day's work was that of following the hounds of the county hunt on a borrowed horse, or of sporting in September, by leave of the squire, over the said squire's stubbles: and that the fine lady, who was fitted certainly to adorn a drawing-room and to perfect herself in Poonah-painting (if that were the fashion of the day)—we say, those who had predicted that this fine gentleman and lady would have neither the strength, nor patience, nor perseverance, nor physical endurance requisite for their mad scheme, were never more mistaken in their lives. They had determined to adapt themselves to their circumstances, and they did it; and this, too, without derogating from true delicacy. The polish of former refinement was taken off, certainly; but Mr. Bracy, in spite of rough garments and embrowned skin, and a thicker and louder voice than would have suited or altogether matched with a cottage-orné, and Mrs. Bracy, though grown stout with all her bustling, were as much and as truly a gentleman and a lady as ever they had been; nor did they think it needful to neglect altogether the refinements of life. And thus the two daughters of the Bracys, their only living children, who had been born to them in their expatriation, though necessarily brought into contact with much that was rude and ignorant around them, and properly led to attach more value to the sterling useful arts of domestic life than to the tinsel of mere conventional accomplishments, were neither untaught nor, to a certain extent, unaccomplished; though their whole lives—with the exception of an occasional and short visit to Sydney or Melbourne—had been passed in the bush, first of New South Wales, and more lately of the colony which reckoned among its flourishing farms that at Hunter's Creek.

There were evidences of cultivated taste, we said, in the chamber to which we introduced our readers, and from which our not useless digression so soon drew us aside. There was, for instance, a set of book-shelves, containing a select and, with one exception, a well-assorted library. Books of history, science, and of light literature; French books, Italian books, and English books, were there. There was one exception, we said: can our readers fill up the blank?

The Bracys were not infidels; certainly not, they would have said. They were not heathens; from that suspicion they would have revolted with indignation. They were not Jews; not a drop of Jewish blood circulated in their veins. They were not Mohammedans; the idea would have excited a smile. What then—were they Christians? They would have answered, Yes; but were they Christians? They were just such Christians as are to be met with by thousands around us—matter-of-course Christians. We have said enough.

Besides books, other indications of refinement, somewhat unusual in Australian farms, were visible in that "ladies' chamber," and elsewhere through the house; but after all, neatness, cleanliness, and good housewifery were the prominent

features of the entire establishment, which spread around it an air of home-comfort not contradicted by appearances of discontent, over-carefulness, or disaffection, latent or active, on any human features which Hunter's Creek looking-glasses ever reflected. It might, on the contrary, have been truly enough surmised that the Bracys were tolerably well satisfied with the world—their little world; and if we should add, that they had no desire to exchange it for a better, not even for a heavenly, home, we should only give expression to the most uncomfortable thought which ever passed through any of their minds—the thought that they were not to live on earth for ever—to say nothing of Hunter's Creek.

But the three young women at needlework in that chamber, on that same gloomy and gusty evening—we have rambled away from them strangely, we confess—even to the end of our chapter. Have patience with us, reader; there are other chapters to come; and, merely introducing them as the two sisters, Eleanor and Frances Bracy, and Mercy Matson, the daughter of the store-keeper at the neighbouring township, we must postpone their more familiar acquaintance till our next.

THE NEW VACCINATION ACT.

THIS "act, further to extend and make compulsory the practice of vaccination," has been in operation since August last. Under its provisions, the parents or guardians of every child are required to have it vaccinated within three months from the date of its birth, and afterwards inspected by a medical officer, so as to receive from him a certificate of the success of the operation. We propose briefly to narrate some of the interesting facts which have rendered such an enactment necessary.

The title of the act implies two things: first, that the safeguard against small-pox has been too little used; and, secondly, that it is thought by the government no longer advisable to leave the use or neglect of vaccination to the discretion of the great body of the people. The want of education makes itself felt in this direction also. Vaccination is practised wherever individuals recognise the full value of health, and know how it may be most effectually conserved; but it is neglected to a lamentable extent among the uninstructed poor. In some countries, where education is more generally diffused than in England, it has been compulsory for a long period; and these localities have been comparatively free from small-pox in consequence. If we have suffered from the disease to a larger extent, however, we may ascribe it, perhaps truly, to the slight abuse of a great good—the wholesome fear our rulers have of legislating upon matters which admit of being settled by the force of public conscience and judgment. But, in this instance, abundant evidence might be adduced to prove the wisdom of interference on the part of the legislature. The private law of parental affection and prudence has not been found strong enough to render unnecessary the help of the external public enactment. We propose now to glance rapidly at some of the evidence on this subject which was laid not long since before the House.

It is now fifty-five years ago since Dr. Jenner

published the result of his investigations into the nature of the vaccine disease, and introduced the practice of vaccination into the world. To estimate duly the value of his discovery, we must remember the fact, that one out of every four or five persons attacked by small-pox, in its unmitigated form, used to perish; and that if death were escaped, the victims of the disease were liable to disfigurement, deformity, and other physical ills, to an amount frightful to contemplate. When lady Wortley Montague found the practice of inoculation in Turkey, she rejoiced at the mitigation of evil its introduction into her own country promised. She wrote from Constantinople, in 1718, as follows:—"The French ambassador says, pleasantly, that they take the small-pox here by way of diversion, as they take the waters in other countries. There is no example of any one that has died of it, and you may believe I am well satisfied of the safety of this experiment since I intend to try it on my dear little son. I am patriot enough to take pains to bring this useful invention into fashion in England, and I should not fail to write to some of our doctors very particularly about it, if I knew any one of them that I thought had virtue enough to destroy such a considerable branch of their revenue for the good of mankind. But that distemper is too beneficial to them, not to expose to all their resentment the hardy wight that should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps, if I live to return, I may, however, have courage to war with them. Upon this occasion, admire the heroism in the heart of your friend."

When lady Mary returned, in 1721, and put in practice this determination, she was sorely tempted to repent it. Torrents of abuse assailed her: she was denounced from the pulpits, and upbraided as an unnatural mother by the ignorant; and so virulent was the feeling of the faculty against her, that when her daughter was inoculated, and four eminent physicians appointed to watch the progress of the experiment, she says she feared to leave her child a moment alone with them, lest they should in some way mar its success, and injure her. The court and people found out, at length, however, the value of lady Mary's knowledge and courage, and the practice of inoculation spread through England and many parts of the world. It was a very imperfect mitigation of the original evil: it took for granted that every individual *must* have the disease; and though, when produced thus artificially, it appeared in a milder form, and ended fatally very much less frequently, it spread the infection, and left behind the same liability to other illnesses and disfigurement, though in diminished severity. But it turned the attention of medical science towards the discovery of further remedies, and this perhaps was its most valuable result.

It was a happy thing that Dr. Jenner resisted the allurements of a partnership in London, and settled down quietly to a country practice in his native town. Had he accepted John Hunter's offer, the dairymaids in Gloucestershire might probably have enjoyed immunity from small-pox for no one knows how many years, without the world at large gaining by it. But Dr. Jenner had a love for country things; and at Berkeley, it seems, possessed a large power of patient observation

and research; he studied the vaccine disease for twenty-three years, and then announced to the community that he had discovered a safeguard against small-pox. Inoculation had paved the way for the new wonder, and it was received with less opposition than falls to the lot of many fresh discoveries. The duke of York introduced the practice of vaccination into the army: it spread through England, was welcomed on the continent, in South America, the United States, and China; and its beneficent influence has been extending ever since, more and more generally.

To mark its appreciation of Dr. Jenner's services, parliament voted him a sum of 10,000*l.* in 1802, and an addition of 20,000*l.* five years afterwards, and the national vaccine establishment was instituted to promote the knowledge and extension of them. And so, at length, poison met poison, and the virulence of the most destructive was abated. The pestilence, that had been generated under the fierce sun of Africa, and had stalked through the nations to lay them waste, met its antidote in the peaceful meadows of Gloucestershire.

So simple and so efficacious is the remedy thus introduced, that it may well excite our wonder that it has not long since been universally used. That many of our poor people were not fully aware of the value of vaccination, or that they neglected to avail themselves of it, is clearly shown in the disproportion between the vaccinations and births, exhibited in "Returns made by the Guardians of the Poor relative to the progress of Vaccination in 1851-2 in England and Wales." In the former year, 592,347 births were registered, while the number of vaccinations was only 349,091; in 1852, the births amounted to 601,839, the vaccinations to 397,128. Of the children vaccinated, a very large proportion indeed were registered as being above one year old. This is a somewhat serious matter, for diseases are most likely to seize infants under that age, who accordingly ought to be guarded against small-pox as early as possible after birth.

In 1850, the board of the vaccine establishment, after regretting "that the protective power of vaccination was still so much neglected as to permit a frightful amount of mortality from small-pox in the united kingdom," reminded the government that the progress of vaccination was more rapid in countries where it was promoted by legislative enactments, and expressed their conviction that the legislature alone could effectually help to extinguish the pestilence. In that year a bill carrying out the views of the board was introduced into the house; a variety of valuable information relative to small-pox and compulsory vaccination was collected and arranged by the committee of the Epidemiological Society; and, in accordance with the results set forth in their report, the act now in operation has been framed. This report contains much that is interesting. We find from its tables, for instance, that mortality from small-pox exists everywhere in proportion to the greater or less neglect of vaccination; wherever the latter is compulsory there are fewer victims to the disease. Thus, in England and Wales, while the average number of deaths from small-pox, compared with the total mortality during eight

years ending 1850 or 1851, was 21·9 per 1000, that in Saxony (the highest of the averages returned), was 8·33 per 1000; while in Bohemia, Lombardy, and Sweden, it was little above 2 per 1000. The continental states have various methods of enforcing vaccination: some, as Prussia, Bavaria, and Hanover, by fines or imprisonment; others, by requiring the production of a certificate testifying the success of the operation, from apprentices, servants, candidates for admission into public schools, alms-houses, etc. Zealous public vaccinators are rewarded with gold and silver medals in France and Belgium. In Austria, no child is allowed to attend either public or private schools, and no person is permitted to receive relief from the charity boards, without having been vaccinated. In Denmark, we find it stated, on the highest medical authority, that variols had at one time disappeared before the defensive influence of compelled vaccination, though, it is added, "that chance, and a careless security engendered by the absence of the pest, have led to its re-introduction there."

Dr. Cannon, of Simla, states, "that in June, 1850, small-pox broke out along the left bank of the Sutlej. Dr. C. immediately set his vaccinators to work along the right bank. The results were, that the disease along the left bank, where there was no attempt made to arrest it, destroyed from fifty to sixty per cent., but along the right bank from five to six per cent. only; and in many of these cases the proper performance of vaccination was doubtful."

All the facts in the report from which we have quoted have one tendency—to prove to any who yet entertain any doubt of it, the efficacy of vaccination, and the necessity of enforcing the use of the safeguard upon those who, from carelessness or ignorance, neglect to avail themselves of its protection. "If it admit of doubt," write the committee, "how far it is justifiable in this free country to compel a person to take care of his own life and that of his offspring, it can scarcely be disputed that no one has a right to put in jeopardy the lives of his fellow-subjects. The principle of using one's own so as not to injure another's is one which has always been acted upon in our legislation as regards property and personal nuisances, and we submit that it is but an extension of this principle to apply it to the questions of life and health."

Yes, legislation must step in while education grows! When the latter spreads through our land with its enlightening and elevating influence, such enactments as the one under consideration may, we trust, become obsolete. The parents who have knowledge as their handmaiden, an enlightened conscience as their guide, and duty as their watchword, will need them little. Let present educators take heed that they be training such!

THINGS TO BE REMEMBERED.

Forgetfulness of God is at the bottom of all sin, as the remembrance of our Creator betimes is the happy and hopeful beginning of a holy life.

Those that most fear God's wrath are least likely to feel it.

The fear of God reigning in the heart is the best antidote against the ensnaring fear of man.

LIEUTENANT BELLOT.

FIFTY years ago, the idea of a French sailor serving on board an English ship, or of a member of the House of Lords solving an analytical problem before the Académie des Sciences, would have been regarded as the quintessence of absurdity. In most quarters of society, it was thought at the time that the English and French must, as such, bear to each other the same relation that is said to exist between cats and dogs. They could not help it. If John Bull met Jacques Bonhomme, the conversation was often sure to end angrily. Such might be the case under the reign of Napoleon I.; but things in this respect, as well as in many others, are altered for the better; and if the word *fraternize* had not become almost inseparably connected with *sundry folks* whose amicable "hugs" were practised on the guillotine, we might say that England and France have now, so far as regards national antipathies, *fraternized*. The union-jack, at the present time, waving side by side with the tricolor, is defending in the Black Sea the integrity of Europe; Lord Brougham reads lectures to the *savants* of the Institute; and a young French naval lieutenant meets with an untimely death whilst united in a fellowship of devotedness, scientific ardour, and true bravery, to a band of English sailors.

Lieutenant Bellot was born in Paris, on March 18, 1826. When fifteen years old, he became a successful candidate for a scholarship at the naval and military school which the government maintains at Brest, in Britanny. Our readers will remember that, in France, commissions in the army or navy are never obtained by purchase. A severe course of studies, tested from time to time by examinations, is required from all those who would secure even the lowest position on the list of officers; and although appointments are often given to non-commissioned subalterns, according to seniority, yet about two-thirds of the promotions are carried by the pupils from the several military schools. Young Bellot remained at Brest until the month of September, 1843, when he appeared the fifth on an examination list of eighty candidates, who were ordered out on active service. This was taking a very high standing at once—a standing, too, which seemed a bright omen for the future; for we should bear in mind that in France, as well as in England, a brilliant examination is not always a test of merit. Whilst it will often happen, to use the Harrow phrase, that a "*swat*" is nonplussed on trial-day by a question put in a puzzling manner; so, on the other hand, we not unfrequently find boys, who during the whole term have kept towards the lower end of the form, rising to be second or third before a board of examiners. Thus it was that young Bellot's position, when called to hear the result of his first trial, was, as we have said, full of the promise of future excellence; for the note which followed his name on the report gave ample testimony to his uniform steadiness, diligence, and conscientiousness in the performance of all his duties.

After having served for nearly six months on board two different ships—the "Suffren" and the "Friedland"—he obtained the privilege of being sent on a cruising expedition. Every year a certain number of pupils are admitted in the naval school



LIEUTENANT BELLOT.

at Brest; consequently, an equal proportion of young men leave this establishment at the issue of the September examinations, who are immediately considered as belonging to the service, and receive their pay as such. But it is manifest that opportunity does not always offer to employ effectively all the candidates, and so the majority are obliged, except in cases of war, to waste their time for a couple of years in a sea-port town, unless indeed a taste for science induces them to engage in useful researches, and to follow up the instruction which they have received during their time of probation. M. Bellot felt no anxiety to adopt the lazy habits of a garrison-life: he was anxious to be employed upon a service which he was passionately fond of, and we may imagine his joy when he heard that he had been ordered to Madagascar on board the corvette "Berceau." He set out on June 23, 1844.

We read, a few days ago, a passage from a French work, in which the prince de Ligne sketches, or rather *dashes off* (such is the energy of his style), the character of a true soldier. "Do not merely say," he writes, "that you like your duties; . . . you must be passionately fond of them; yes, passionately, that is the word. If you do not dream of military exploits; if you do not, so to say, devour plans, maps, and books on the subject of war; if you do not honour the footsteps of old soldiers; if you do not weep at the account of their battles; if the anxiety to be present in some engagement does not almost drive you mad; if, in short, you are not ready to die for shame at not having been actively employed, although it is no fault of yours; take quickly off a uniform which you disgrace. The manoeuvring of a single battalion should en-

rapture you; you should long to be everywhere present; you should tremble lest the rain were to stop the drilling of your regiment."^{*}

Such was the view which the prince de Ligne took of his profession. M. Bellot's enthusiasm, however, was more rational, and was not confined to those exercises belonging to the soldier's career: he delighted in scientific investigations, and meteorological problems found him as ready as if he had been called to spike a gun or to "clear for action." He was still on board the "Berceau" in April, 1845, and distinguished himself very highly in the expedition against Tamatava, conducted by captain Romain Desfosses. As a reward for his bravery he obtained the cross of the legion of honour; a decree from the minister of marine had already appointed him as first-class pupil: with this promotion he was attached to the "Belle Poule" frigate.

At that time a passing cloud of national difference somewhat overhung the relations between England and France; and it is remarkable that under circumstances when, perhaps, something of jealousy or of angry feeling might have pervaded the sailors of those two great maritime powers, M. Bellot was distinguished in the British navy, and by the officers with whom he then associated, by the appellation of "*l'ami des Anglais*." In addition to the duties which devolved upon the

* The above advice of the prince is a fair specimen of what we may term the almost idolatrous pursuit of an earthly object, so often recommended and exemplified by men of the world. Much as "life in earnest" is to be admired, and intensity of application recommended, when under the regulation of religious principle, there is really nothing short of an eternal object worthy of striving for in the manner recommended in this quotation.—ED.



DEATH OF LIEUTENANT BELLOT.

young officer, he availed himself, as usual, of every opportunity of rendering service to those who composed the crew of "La Belle Poule." He gave the sailors lessons in geometry, and in other branches of practical science; he continued, besides, his own scientific observations, and when, on February 1, 1847, captain Romain Desfosses was called by the French government to another command, this gentleman bore ample testimony in his report to the unabated zeal and diligence of M. Bellot. On November 1, 1847, the brevet of ensign was presented to M. Bellot, and he sailed for La Plata on board the corvette "Triomphante." In this new position he co-operated with the British forces in a series of very brilliant operations, which were of much political importance to both nations. The year 1850 finds him at Rochefort; and as late as March 1, 1851, he was attached to the dépôt company quartered in that port.

M. Bellot had always entertained the highest admiration for the character of sir John Franklin; and when he heard of the expedition fitted out by lady Franklin, under the command of captain Kennedy, he asked and obtained leave to join it. During the voyage he showed the greatest energy, and rendered his name distinguished by the discovery known as Bellot's Strait, between Somerset and Boothia Felix. On his return home, he endeavoured to prevail upon the French government

to organize an expedition having a similar aim with that whose perils he had just shared. His application was not noticed; but the minister of marine proved that he appreciated the young volunteer's heroism by bestowing upon him a lieutenancy, although he had not served as ensign the five years, required by the naval regulations.

Captain Inglefield's expedition was then planned, and all the appointments having been made before lieutenant Bellot volunteered the second time, it was with some difficulty that his services were engaged. "Give me," said the lieutenant, "but a plank to lie upon, and a corner in which to put my clothes; I ask no more." The case was laid by sir James Graham before captain Inglefield, who immediately expressed his joy in welcoming Bellot, not as a subaltern, but as a comrade. The interesting report which has appeared in the public papers contains the best panegyric of lieutenant Bellot's conduct throughout a voyage which, for him, was to have so melancholy a termination. Late and early he was at his duty. The dip of the needle occupied his attention by day; the night he devoted to scientific operations. Such was his example to the British officers and sailors. With respect to his gallantry, there never was an occasion when danger was to be braved, or when difficulties were to be confronted, on which he was not a volunteer. Nay, his life was at length lost in

services of danger for which he had volunteered.

When captain Inglefield's flotilla reached the English shore, amongst the distinguished officers associated with him, none was expected more anxiously than lieutenant Bellot. Engaged to the daughter of lady Franklin, he had returned, as all hoped, to enjoy the happiness and the reward which his generosity so completely entitled him to. Judge of the general disappointment, when the following melancholy paragraph appeared in the newspapers:—

"One event has occurred which serves to cast a shadow of gloom over the incidents of captain Inglefield's voyage; namely, the untimely death, by drowning, of the gallant young French lieutenant Bellot. He had charge of a party, in order to reach sir Edward Belcher, to communicate to him the important fact of the large deposit of provisions which captain Inglefield had made at Beechy Island—information which, no doubt, would materially influence the movements of the squadron. He has thus literally given his life to the cause to which he devoted himself with a zeal and ability never surpassed; and deeply will his brother officers in the noble service lament the premature termination of a life so precious to all who knew him, and so valuable to his country."

Captain Inglefield's own despatch adds a few more particulars, which are as follows:—"I received, by an official letter from captain Pullen, a report of the melancholy intelligence of the death of M. Bellot, who had been sent by captain Pullen, on his return during my absence, to acquaint me of the same, and to carry on the original despatches to sir Edward Belcher. This unfortunate occurrence took place on the night of the gale, when M. Bellot with two men were driven from the shore on the floe; and shortly after, while reconnoitring from the top of a hummock, he was blown off, by a violent gust of wind, into a deep crack in the ice, and perished by drowning. The two men were saved by a comparative miracle, and after driving about for thirty hours without food, were enabled to land and rejoin their fellow-travellers, who gave them provisions, and then all returned to the ship, bringing back in safety the despatches; but three of them fit subjects only for invaliding."

The promptness with which the British nation acknowledged their sense of lieutenant Bellot's merits reflects great honour, upon both those who bestowed the merited reward, and him to whose memory it was dedicated. On Friday, November 4th, a public meeting was held at Willis's rooms, to devise measures for the purpose of giving substantial expression to this feeling. Sir Roderick Murchison was in the chair; and among the company were sir James Graham, sir Edward Parry, sir Robert Harry Inglis, colonel Sabine, captain Parry, and captain Inglefield. The resolutions, unanimously carried, stated that a general subscription should be promoted towards erecting a monument to the memory of lieutenant Bellot; the monument to be placed on an appropriate spot at or near the royal hospital of Greenwich. After the expenses incident upon this work have been paid, the surplus, if any, shall be applied for the benefit of M. Bellot's relations. We may just add, that the French government has granted to the

mother of the gallant lieutenant a pension of 2000 francs.

It is impossible to contemplate without pain the early loss of a life so promising, and of a youth whose affections were so generous. But human existence is full of such lessons—as a caution that our affections should be fixed on things above, and not below. Sir James Graham, indeed, in his speech upon the erection of a monument to the young lieutenant, expressed this sentiment not inaptly, when he called on his audience to turn their thoughts from this scene of sublunary disappointment, to that region where sorrow is unknown—its inhabitants having "felicity as their state, angels as their company, God as their portion, and eternity as the measure of their enjoyment."

A MONKEY FORAY.

No one who has ever seen the monkey department of the Zoological Gardens can possibly forget the extraordinary actions and antics—now grotesque, now ridiculous, now disgusting, and anon most touchingly affecting—of these versatile creatures, which in a few minutes he was permitted to witness. But, if thus amusing and instructive while "cribbed, cabined, and confined" within the narrow limits of a cage, how much more so may we not expect them to be when in the enjoyment of that wild liberty in which they so exuberantly delight. Sketches of their mischievous activity are sometimes met with in the works of travellers; and one of the best we ever remember to have seen has just attracted our attention in a recently-issued and very readable work, on "Life in Abyssinia," from the pen of Mr. Parkyns, who has spent many years in that land of ancient renown, and other African countries conterminous with it.

On entering a certain well-wooded ravine, while pursuing his peregrinations, he found the trees filled with the "tota" or "waag," a beautiful little greenish-grey monkey, with black face and white whiskers. "I followed a troop of these," he says, "for a long time, while the porters and servants were resting—not at all with the intention of hurting them, but merely for the pleasure of watching their movements. If you go tolerably carefully towards them they will allow you to approach very near, and you will be much amused with their goings-on, which differ but little from those of the large no-tailed monkeys, 'Beni Adam.' You may see them quarrelling, making love, mothers taking care of their children, combing their hair, nursing and suckling them; and the passions—jealousy, anger, love—as fully and distinctly marked as in men. They have a language as distinct to them as ours is; and their women are as noisy and fond of disputation as any fish-fag in Billingsgate."

"The monkeys, especially the cynocephali, who are astonishingly clever fellows, have their chiefs, whom they obey implicitly, and a regular system of tactics in war, pillaging expeditions, robbing corn-fields, etc. These monkey-forays are managed with the utmost regularity and precaution. A tribe, coming down to feed from their village on the mountain (usually a cleft in the face of some cliff), brings with it all its members, male and

2000
pain
of a
But
can-
nings
indeed,
to the
ot in-
their
point-
—its
ngels
eter-

ment
; the
esque,
most
ures,
wit-
while
nar-
y we
nt of
antly
civity
ers;
have
tly-
bys-
has
own,
it.
while
rees
tiful
and
se,"
and
ten-
sure
ably
ap-
sed
rom
eni-
ing
mb-
and
and
an-
their
any

who
efs,
em
ng
red
A
on
me
nd

female, old and young. Some, the elders of the tribe, distinguishable by the quantity of mane which covers their shoulders, like a lion's, take the lead, peering cautiously over each precipice before they descend, and climbing to the top of every rock or stone which may afford them a better view of the road before them. Others have their posts as scouts on the flanks or rear; and all fulfil their duties with the utmost vigilance, calling out at times, apparently to keep order among the motley pack which forms the main body, or to give notice of the approach of any real or imagined danger. Their tones of voice on these occasions are so distinctly varied, that a person much accustomed to watch their movements will at length fancy—and perhaps with some truth—that he can understand their signals.

"The main body is composed of females, inexperienced males, and young people of the tribe. Those of the females who have small children carry them on their back. Unlike the dignified march of the leaders, the rabble go along in a most disorderly manner, trotting on and chattering, without taking the least heed of anything, apparently confiding in the vigilance of their scouts. Here a few of the youth linger behind to pick the berries off some tree, but not long, for the rear-guard coming up forces them to regain their places. There a matron pauses for a moment to suckle her offspring, and, not to lose time, dresses its hair while it is taking its meal. Another younger lady, probably excited by jealousy or by some sneering look or word, pulls an ugly mouth at her neighbour, and then, uttering a shrill squeal highly expressive of rage, vindictively snatches at her rival's leg or tail with her hand, and gives her perhaps a bite in the hind-quarters. This provokes a retort, and a most unladylike quarrel ensues, till a loud bark of command from one of the chiefs calls them to order. A single cry of alarm makes them all halt and remain on the *qui vive*, till another bark in a different tone reassures them, and they then proceed on their march.

"Arrived at the cornfields, the scouts take their position on the eminences all round, while the remainder of the tribe collect provision with the utmost expedition, filling their cheek-pouches as full as they can hold, and then tucking the heads of corn under their armpits. Now, unless there be a partition of the collected spoil, how do the scouts feed?—for I have watched them several times, and never observed them to quit for a moment their post of duty till it was time for the tribe to return, or till some indication of danger induced them to take to flight. They show also the same sagacity in searching for water, discovering at once the places where it is most readily found in the sand, and then digging for it with their hands just as men would, relieving one another in the work if the quantity of sand to be removed be considerable.

"Their dwellings are usually chosen in clefts of rocks, so as to protect them from the rain, and always placed so high that they are inaccessible to most other animals. The leopard is their worst enemy, for, being nearly as good a climber as they, he sometimes attacks them, and then there is a tremendous uproar. I remember one night, when outlying on the frontier, being disturbed in my

sleep by the most awful noises I ever heard—at least they appeared as such, exaggerated by my dreams. I started up, thinking it was an attack of the negroes, but I soon recognised the voices of my baboon friends from the mountain above. On my return home I related the fact to the natives, who told me that a leopard was probably the cause of all this panic. I am not aware how he succeeds among them. The people say that he sometimes manages to steal a young one, and make off, but that he seldom ventures to attack a full-grown ape. He would doubtless find such a one an awkward customer; for the ape's great strength and activity, and the powerful canine teeth with which he is furnished, would render him a formidable enemy, were he, from desperation, forced to stand and defend his life. It is most fortunate that their courage is only sufficiently great to induce them to act on the defensive. This indeed they only do against a man when driven to it by fear: otherwise they generally prefer prudence to valour. Had their combativeness been proportioned to their physical powers, coming as they do in bodies of two or three hundred, it would have been impossible for the natives to go out of the village except in parties, and armed; and, instead of little boys, regiments of armed men would be required to guard the cornfields.

"I have, however, frequently seen them turn on dogs, and have heard of their attacking women whom they may have accidentally met alone in the roads or woods. On one occasion I was told of a woman who was so grievously maltreated by them, that, although she was succoured by the opportune arrival of some passers-by, she died a few days after, from the fright and ill-treatment she had endured.

"To show that their cleverness depends in some measure upon powers of reflection, and not entirely on that instinct with which all animals are endowed, and which serves them only to procure the necessaries of life and to defend themselves against their enemies, I will relate an anecdote to which I can testify as an eye-witness. At Khar-tum, the capital of the provinces of Upper Nubia, I saw a man showing a large male and two females of this breed, who performed several clever tricks at his command. I entered into conversation with him as to their sagacity, the mode of teaching them, and various other topics relating to them. Speaking of his male monkey, he said that he was the most dexterous thief imaginable, and that every time he was exhibited he stole dates and other provisions sufficient for his food for the day. In proof of this he begged me to watch him for a few minutes. I did so, and presently the keeper led him to a spot near a date-seller who was sitting on the ground with his basket beside him. Here his master put him through his evolutions; and, although I could perceive that the monkey had an eye to the fruit, yet so completely did he disguise his intentions that no careless observer would have noticed it. He did not at first appear to care about approaching the basket; but gradually brought himself nearer and nearer, till at last he got quite close to its owner. In the middle of one of his feats he suddenly started up from the ground on which he was lying stretched like a corpse, and, uttering a cry as of pain or rage,

fixed his eyes full at the face of the date-seller, and then, without moving the rest of his body, stole as many dates as he could hold in one of his hind hands. The date-man, being stared out of countenance, and his attention diverted by this extraordinary movement, knew nothing about the theft till a bystander told him of it, and then he joined heartily in the laugh that was raised against him. The monkey, having very adroitly popped the fruit into his cheek-pouches, had moved off a few yards, when a boy in the crowd round him pulled him sharply by the tail. Conscience-stricken, he fancied that it had been done in revenge by the date-seller whom he had robbed ; and, so passing close by the true offender and between the legs of one or two others in the circle, he fell on the unfortunate fruiter, and would no doubt have bitten him severely but for the interference of his master, who came to the rescue.

"I have never thought it worth while to teach monkeys of my own any tricks, always preferring to watch their natural actions. I had in Abyssinia a young one of the same breed as the last mentioned. From the first day she was given to me her attachment was remarkable, and nothing would induce her to leave me at any time ; in fact her affection was sometimes ludicrously annoying. As she grew up she became more sedate, and was less afraid of being left alone. She would sit and watch whatever I did, with an expression of great intelligence ; and the moment I turned my back she would endeavour to imitate what I had been doing. Mr. Rodatz, master of the German brig 'Alf,' coming up the country for a cargo of animals for Mauritius, gave me a copy of 'Peter Simple,' the first English book, besides the Bible and Nautical Almanac, that I had seen for more than two years. As soon as I was alone I of course sat down and began greedily to feast on its contents, though I had read it several times before leaving England. 'Lemdy' was as usual seated beside me, at times looking quietly at me, occasionally catching a fly, or, jumping on my shoulder, endeavouring to pick out the blue marks tattooed there. At last I got up to light a pipe, and on my return found she had taken my seat with the book on her knee, and with a grave expression of countenance was turning over the leaves page by page, as she had observed me to do—with the difference only that, not being able to read their contents, she turned one after the other as quickly as possible, and that, from her arms being short, and she not yet much used to books, she tore each page from the top nearly to the bottom. She had completed the destruction of half the volume before I returned. During my momentary absences she would often take up my pipe and hold it to her mouth till I came back, when she would restore it to me with the utmost politeness.

"These monkeys are caught in various ways. One plan adopted by the Arabs of Taka has struck me as the most simple, and at the same time as likely to succeed as any other. Large jars of the common country beer, sweetened with dates, and drugged with the juice of the 'dscher' (*Asclepias arborea*), are left near the places where they come to drink. The monkeys, pleased with the sweetness of the beverage, drink largely of it, and, soon falling asleep, are taken up senseless by the Arabs, who have been watching from a distance."

BREAD FROM AFAR.

We breakfasted this morning from a home-baked loaf, manufactured with flour from foreign wheat—wheat grown, as our friend the factor informed us, in Podolia, a district of Russian Poland. As bread has of late become a very interesting subject to a large section of our readers, and is likely, from various causes, to claim their attention for some time to come, it may amuse them to trace very briefly the history and the travels of the aforesaid loaf, ere it arrived at our breakfast-table. Let us, then, transport ourselves in imagination to one of the vast undulating tracts of Russo-Poland, lying some hundred of miles north-west of the Black Sea, and look around us.

We are in an immense plain, stretching far beyond the limits of vision, the soil of which possesses astonishing aptitude for the growth of grain of all kinds. The land is a stranger to manure, which is never used for the purpose of fertilizing it—the only restorative process consisting of the rest which it receives every third year, during which it lies fallow. It is cultivated by serfs, who have no pecuniary interest in the crop, no inalienable property beyond the tools they work with, and no wages either in money or rations ; but who have each three acres of land upon which to support themselves, and three days in each week allowed for its cultivation. They dwell in wretched huts, where large families, consisting sometimes of three generations, are crowded in the only room, in which, during the winter nights, all sleep huddled together for warmth around the stove. Groups of these huts constitute the villages, which at irregular intervals dot the illimitable plain. Each village may contain the serfs belonging to a single estate, and they are the property of its owner as much as is the land they live on. The owner, however, they never see : he lives far away—in Moscow, in St. Petersburg, or in Novgorod, as the case may be—and leases his land, with the serfs upon it, to a middleman, whose sole object in life it is to get as great a profit from the produce as he possibly can. The land is left without drainage as well as without manure—not a penny being ever spent in either of these processes ; but as the surface is covered with a series of natural dykes and ditches, the want of drainage is not much felt by these primitive husbandmen.

The return for the labour and skill of the cultivator is not of course so great, upon such a system as the above, as with English farmers who are obliged to make the most of their land : it is reckoned a good crop if seven bushels of grain are reaped for one bushel sown. The land only bears wheat (which the serfs never eat) once in three years—a crop of oats or rye following the wheat—and the third year nothing. The agricultural labours are divided between the serfs and the bullocks, and without the services of the latter nothing could be done. The crop is rarely known to fail ; and it is from these interminable plains that the capacious granaries of Odessa are principally supplied.

But Odessa is perhaps several hundred miles off ; and to the mind of the modern Englishman it would seem a hopeless task to carry grain thither through a country which has no railways, roads, or

canals. Let us see how it is accomplished. Suppose the harvest over early in the summer, and the corn lazily threshed out and measured into sacks. Now comes the business of transport. Upon a carriage of the rudest construction, entirely made of wood, often nothing more than the trunk of a tree (the lateral branches hewn into axle-trees) mounted on four lumbering wheels, eight of these sacks, containing something less than four English quarters, are deposited. This is the corn-wagon; to it a couple of oxen are yoked, and then it is given in charge to a driver, a serf, who, for a very modest consideration, undertakes to deliver the grain at the granary in Odessa. The driver, clad in sheep-skins, and wearing a mass of unkempt beard, and being armed with a ponderous thong, mounts in front; he carries a big pot of malodorous grease dangling between his legs, of which grease he is compelled to make continual use to save his clumsy machine from taking fire in four places at once. There is no road, but there is a broad track, which has been travelled for generations by such equipages in thousands. They set forth in bands, and when one, as continually happens, sticks fast in rut, quag, or slough, the cattle of his neighbour are at hand to help him out. Ten English miles is a good day's journey; and for many days, perhaps weeks, the grass at the way-side supplies the food of the oxen. But, unhappily, there lies between the cultivated land and the coast a broad belt of arid desert soil, called the Steppe, which produces nothing to support life of any sort. To cross this, even in the narrowest part, occupies several days, and fodder must be carried to keep the bullocks in good working order, as the ground is rough, and there are hills to be surmounted. This is the difficult and dangerous part of the expedition, and when violent rains convert the sand and earth of the Steppe into mud, it becomes impossible to traverse it in time, and numbers of the oxen perish from hunger.

During the months of exportation, lasting from the close of summer till towards the end of autumn, these corn-wagons come pouring into Odessa at the rate of many hundreds a day. To prevent confusion, they are compelled to follow a prescribed route through the city—entering by one road and passing out at another, dropping their burdens at the granaries of their consignees as they proceed. The granaries at Odessa are massive and gorgeous erections, rivalling in vastness and architectural magnificence the club-houses at the west end of London.

From Odessa, the wheat which supplied our breakfast crossed the Black Sea in a British ship, passed through the sea of Marmora, skirted the hundred isles of the Archipelago, and traversed the whole length of the Mediterranean to Gibraltar, and thence home to London, after a prosperous voyage. It was ground by steam-mills on the banks of the Thames, was sold by sample in Mark-lane, and delivered to order. Betty baked it yesterday in a square tin mould, and it consummated its eventful career this morning at half-past eight, in company with a rasher of bacon from Wiltshire, which was born in Ireland—an infusion of congou from Canton, sweetened with sugar from Jamaica, and cooled to the swallowing point with milk from a cow with horns warranted

to have no connection with her of the iron tail.

Here we had finished with our account of the breakfast-bread; but our housekeeper has just assured us that, together with the new flour from Odessa, which formed the major part of the morning's loaf, was little left from the last American barrel, which of course could not be wasted; so that we have been devouring, at the same moment of time, the produce of the east of Europe and the far west of America. There is no reason, however, that we should cross the Atlantic, even in imagination, to speculate on the agriculture and commerce of the back settlements; the reader can do that for himself, if he chose, without our assistance.

MANCHESTER FREE LIBRARY.

THE last few years have been praiseworthy distinguished above their predecessors by the greater zeal which has been shown in the cause of education. Half a century since, it was a disputed question whether the education of the working classes was likely to promote either their own interests or those of the nation. Now, however, that point is practically settled, and all true philanthropists are seeking, some in one way and some in another, to give the bulk of the people increased facilities for acquiring knowledge. In the more recent stages of this movement, perhaps a foremost place may be modestly claimed on behalf of the great manufacturing community which comprises the city of Manchester and borough of Salford, and a brief account of one of the noble institutions which have recently sprung up within their boundaries may be neither unacceptable nor useless to the reader.

We may premise that, until very recently, the only popular establishment for adult education in Manchester was its Mechanics' Institute, founded by Dr. Birkbeck, and the oldest in the United Kingdom. This institution, which has at present 1500 members on its books, has been eminently successful. While so many of its competitors have gone down, this has not only been self-sustaining, but has made constant progress. It has now a library of 14,000 volumes, a reading-room, day and evening schools, classes in which the various European languages are taught, and regular courses of lectures delivered in its commodious hall, which, with its double tier of galleries, will accommodate 1000 auditors. While several institutions of a similar character have sprung up around it, the Manchester Mechanics' Institute is gaining instead of losing strength, and is about to be removed to a new and costly structure not far from its present site in Cooper-street.

Notwithstanding the acknowledged usefulness of this institution, it was felt that some larger provision should be made for the intellectual wants of the people, and it was rightly judged that a community like Manchester ought to take the initiative in any course which might be advisable to pursue. One of the most pressing wants was that of a public library. Several large collections of books already existed, but they were accessible only to subscribers. There was, indeed, besides these, a noble library, founded some two centuries since by Humphrey Cheetham, a Manchester

merchant; but this, though very rich in patristic lore, contained little to interest the ordinary reader. Accordingly, it was resolved to originate an institution on a scale of suitable magnitude, comprising both a circulating and reference library, which should be free of access to the humblest person who chose to enjoy its privileges. The scheme was first suggested by a munificent gentleman, upon whom her majesty, on the occasion of her recent visit, conferred the honour of knighthood—sir John Potter; who began by giving one thousand pounds himself, and then secured an equal sum from six or seven other individuals. At the same time a working men's committee was organized; every mill was canvassed for contributions, and for two years a stream of pence kept pouring into the exchequer, till at length the institution was opened free from debt, and made over to the corporation in perpetual trust for the use of the inhabitants. Such is, in brief, the history of the Manchester Free Library, of which we will now attempt to give the reader some idea.

The locality in which the building is situated is rather striking. It is by no means the most respectable part of the city, being close to a district known as Knott Mill, from time immemorial the scene of vulgar festivities, such as wakes, fairs, etc. Here, once or twice every year, is gathered an odd jumble of amusements, and a rabble which might vie with that of Donnybrook or St. Bartholomew. Standing at the corner of a large square, the spectator might see, on such occasions, an immense space, literally inclosed with menageries, circuses, penny peep-shows and theatres, caravans exhibiting such marvels as gigantic ladies, learned pigs, and live monsters from the polar seas; every intermediate chink being filled up with "wheels of fortune," in front of which a crowd of rustic starers are eagerly speculating in nuts and gingerbread, puzzling their wits to comprehend how the mysterious machine which seems, as far as they can perceive, to be fairly constructed, always manages to stop to the advantage of its owner—and artists' booths, where the visitor is advertised that he can procure "an accurate and full-length likeness in profile for sixpence." Here, too, on ordinary days, a sort of rag fair is kept, and we may sometimes encounter an itinerant surgeon, dressed in professional black, with a snow-white cravat, expatiating in a style of pretentious accuracy on the merit of some "wonderful pill," which, if we are to credit him, has cured thousands of persons of as many different kinds of complaints.

Close to this scene of immorality and imposture rises the "Free Library." It is an oblong building, somewhat in the Grecian style of architecture, the basement storey being faced with stone, and the upper part stuccoed. It was built originally by the socialists, under the direction of Robert Owen, when that singular man was at the height of his unhappy popularity, and was intended to be the head-quarters of infidelity in Lancashire. Here were advocated principles subversive in their tendency of religion, morality, and society itself; here the orgies of the new moral world were celebrated, in which decorum and decency were systematically set at nought, and from which a flood of ungodliness was for a season poured upon the

community. Christians of all denominations took the alarm, an antagonistic crusade of moral and spiritual influence was commenced, and a church, St. Matthew's, was built immediately opposite. In the course of a few years the storm passed by, the hall of science (with what absurdity so called!) which had never been quite finished, fell into other hands, though still for seven or eight years longer it continued to furnish a rallying-point to the abettors of infidelity. At length, by a happy thought, it was laid hold of for its present purpose, and the ground on which it stands having been most generously made over as a gift by the lord of the manor, and the building itself completely transformed, it was opened to the public in 1851.

The building is entered by a broad door-way, surmounted by the city arms with their significant motto, "*Consilio et labore,*" and an inscription purporting that it was "built by public subscription, and opened in the third year of the mayoralty of John Potter, esq." The entrance-hall contains a handsome staircase, ascending to the top of the building, the folding glass-doors which lead to the lending library opening right before us. Here, however, a curious notice, bearing the signature of the town clerk, offers itself to the reader's eye. It runs thus:—"Since no person will be allowed to handle the books in this library whose hands are not perfectly clean, arrangements for washing have been provided below, of which visitors are requested to avail themselves." Whether our hands happen to need washing or not, a notice like this is sufficient to send us down stairs. There we find a roomy apartment, fitted up with the most convenient cleansing apparatus, comprising basins sunk in long stone tables, provided with taps over each, and holes in the bottom to carry off the water when done with, a row of roller-towels, etc.

Having satisfied our curiosity here, we re-ascend and enter the lending library. This is a spacious apartment, running the entire length of the building, somewhat low as compared with its extent, but well ventilated and admirably suited to its purpose. Two of its sides are completely covered with shelves, now rapidly filling with books; the other two are lined with a selection of first-rate engravings, the area being occupied with tables and stands containing the newspapers of the day; while the librarian's compartment runs across the room at the farther end. The books in this compartment are lent out for home reading to any resident in Manchester or Salford. Considering the extent and character of the population, this arrangement would seem likely to expose the committee to the risk of frequent losses. This is provided against by requiring every person who takes out books to fill up a blank form with the names of two householders, who thereby become responsible for any book which may be lost. This guarantee is only required once, unless the parties signing it give notice that they wish to withdraw it, in which case it must be renewed. Minor breaches of library discipline are effectually remedied by such a notice as we read posted in front of the librarian's desk, and ran thus:—"Notice: T—J—, of Beadle-st., Hulme; J—D—, of Montagu-place, Strangeways; and S—S—, of Milton-terrace, Chester-road; having repeatedly kept their books beyond the specified date, it is

hereby publicly notified that they will be excluded in future from the privileges of this library." These expedients are found to answer very well, and comparatively few losses have occurred. Hitherto the majority of the books lent out have belonged to the lighter departments of literature; but a gratifying change is taking place in this respect, books on scientific and historical subjects being in much greater request than formerly.

Having satisfied our curiosity in the lending library, we may ascend to the library of reference. This is really a noble apartment, not only as spacious as that we have just left, but unusually lofty and elegant. On entering its folding glass-doors, and surveying the whole, the first emotion which rises in the mind of the spectator is one of surprise. Instead of the aspect of mere utility, which might have been expected, its arrangements have a classic and collegiate air, which carries us away from the dark, double-dyed stream of the Irwell to the banks of the Isis or the Cam. The well-matted floor permits us to advance without disturbing the readers; we can pass from table to table, each surrounded with chairs, not forms, in which the fatigued student can recline with rather more than scholastic luxury.

At the tables themselves are seated all sorts of persons, reading all sorts of books. Here is one of a rather literary cast; his "spectacles on nose" and palish countenance tell of the midnight lamp, and the note-book which lies open by his side, and in which he is jotting in brief characters the results of his reading, suggest to us that he is gathering materials for the intellectual laboratory. Who is that eager-looking man, genteel and spare, with a thoughtful face, yet evidently labouring under some exciting impulse? He has asked for "the 'Times,' from January to June, 1825," and is running through the first page of each daily number in search of an advertisement for the "next of kin" to some wealthy East India merchant, whose name he bears. Another, yonder, is busy among the "Blue Books" of the last session; he is selecting the most recent facts, bearing on an important commercial question, to elucidate a speech he has to make to-morrow. But here comes one of an altogether different character, his wooden clogs resounding on the stone staircase like horses' hoofs, till the noise is drowned by the matting, and he moves to the librarian's desk as noiselessly, and, withal, as much of easy confidence as a gentleman in French boots. He has evidently been often here, and is perfectly at home. He goes straight to the catalogues, handles them like a master, soon finds the title of the book he wants, and in less than a minute, with his elbows on the table, and his head resting on the palms of both hands, is buried almost to insensibility in "Scott's Life of Napoleon." One scene more cannot fail to attract us. One table is quite monopolised by ten or twelve young ladies, evidently in charge of a governess, who sits, like a professor, at the top; it is that afternoon in the week which is usually devoted to recreation, and they are seated here, each with a pictorial volume before her, enjoying a rich treat. From these illustrations, which are sketched from actual observation, some idea may be formed of the utility of the institution. It is already the favoured resort of hundreds of all ranks, from the factory

boy to the students of neighbouring collegiate establishments, who come to find here the information which their own libraries may not be able to furnish.

Having adverted to the character of the district in which the institution is situated, it is only proper to add that a great improvement has already taken place, and that the spirit of intelligence which is thus outwardly symbolised in a beautiful structure, combined with those religious influences which are afforded by other agencies, may be expected, ere long, to shame quite away the spirit of buffoonery and vice which has long dwelt there. The Free Library is not alone in this good work: within a minute's walk of it we reach Owen's College, an institution which has been opened within the last four years. It originated in a munificent bequest of 80,000*l.*, which was left for the purpose of founding it by a late resident in Manchester of the name of Owen. It is affiliated with the University of London, and embraces within its curriculum the highest branches of a professional education; thus offering at a cheap rate, to the children of the middle classes, advantages similar to those which the Free Library popularises and offers to all alike. When we view such blessings, which have been provided for the people by the impulses of enlightened patriotism and Christian piety, we feel grateful to Him who has cast our lot in this happy country and these comparatively happy times; nor can we repress a heartfelt prayer, that they may be sanctified to promote the interests of morality and the speedy evangelization of our beloved land.

DECISION OF CHARACTER.

WITHOUT decision of character in religion, there can be neither stability nor security. How many pleasing, hopeful, promising, well-inclined young persons have been altogether drawn aside from the ways of religion into the paths of sin, for want of *making up their minds* on the right side of the question! A hesitating, lingering character is sure to be marked by the seducer and destroyer of men, and is almost sure to become his prey. He who is *almost* persuaded to be a Christian, is in the greatest danger of perishing for want of being *altogether* so. In the time of Noah, we may conclude that many lingered near the ark, and looked at it, and resolved to ask admission into it; but while they hesitated, the door was shut, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

Those who would secure the advantages of religion, and partake its solid enjoyments, must enter into it with all their heart and soul; then every duty will be easy, and every sacrifice light. There will be real peace and satisfaction of mind, in a conscious possession of that which is worth all the world, and which the world can neither give nor take away.

HOW TO TREAT YOUR TROUBLES.—Southey says, in one of his letters:—"I have told you of the Spaniard who always put on spectacles when he was about to eat cherries, that they might look bigger and more tempting. In like manner, I love to make the most of my enjoyments, and though I do not cast my cares away, I pack them in as little compass as possible, and carry them as conveniently as I can for myself, and never let them annoy others."

Varieties.

THE WANDERING LIONS OF HILLAH.—Mr. Layard, in his interesting work on Nineveh, relates some curious facts of two lions, which were presented to him by Osman Pasha, the Turkish general, on his visit to him in Babylonian. "One," he says, "was nearly of full size, and was well known in the bazaars and thoroughfares of Hillah, through which he was allowed to wander unrestrained. The inhabitants could accuse him of no other objectionable habit than that of taking possession of the stalls of the butchers, who, on his approach, made a hasty retreat, leaving him in undisturbed possession of their stores, until he had satisfied his hunger and deemed it time to depart. He would also wait the coming of the large kuffas, or wicker boats, of the fishermen, and, driving away their owners, would help himself to a kind of large barbel, for which he appeared to have a decided relish. For these acts of depredation the beast was perhaps less to be blamed than the Pasha, who rather encouraged a mode of obtaining daily rations, which, although of more than questionable honesty, relieved him from butcher's bills. When no longer hungry, he would stretch himself in the sun, and allow the Arab boys to take such liberties with him as in their mischief they might devise. He was taller and larger than a St. Bernard dog, and, like the lion generally found on the banks of the rivers of Mesopotamia, was without the dark and shaggy mane of the African species. The other lion was but a cub, and unfortunately fell ill of the mange, and died. The former being too old to be sent to England by land, I was thus unable to procure specimens for this country of the Babylonian lion, which has not, I believe, been seen in Europe."

SAND SPRINGS OF THE DESERT.—In crossing the deserts of Southern Mesopotamia, Mr. Layard found the sand extremely distressing. "About six miles from Hillah," he says, "we found ourselves amidst moving sand-hills, extending far and wide on all sides. They were just high enough to shut out of view the surrounding country. The fine sand shifts with every breeze, and the wrinkled heaps are like the rippled surface of a lake. When the furious south-westerly wind sweeps over them, it raises a dense suffocating dust, blinding the wayfarer Arab, and leaving him to perish in the trackless labyrinth." Thirty years only had elapsed, up to the time of Mr. Layard's visit, since the formation of these hillocks. The sand issues from the earth like water from springs, and the Arabs call the sources, of which we passed two or three, "Aioun-er-rummel"—the sand-springs. The banks of ancient canals, still rising among the moving heaps, showed that the soil had once been under cultivation. The sand is now fast spreading over the face of the country, and threatens ere long to overwhelm several small Arab settlements.

MUHAMMEDAN OPINION OF AN ECLIPSE.—The common notion amongst ignorant Mohammedans is, that an eclipse is caused by some evil spirit catching hold of the sun or moon. On such occasions, in eastern towns, the whole population assembles with pots, pans, and other equally rude instruments of music, and, with the aid of their lungs, make a terrible din and turmoil.

NEW AMERICAN PRINTING PRESS.—A New York correspondent gives a report of a new American printing press, which will print from uncut paper, rolling from a cylinder, cutting and folding with perfect regularity 30,000 copies each hour. The inventor declares his ability to print one mile of paper as fast as a locomotive can run on a railway.

PRESERVATION OF STONE.—The following recipe for preventing frost from acting on newly-used Bath and Caen stone is likely to be of service to the architect, builder, and operative. Take fresh burnt lime and mix it to the consistence of whitewash: to one gallon of this add one pint of common salt and a quarter of a pound of alum. This is to be used similar to whitewash, and is to be put on as soon as the lime is run, while it is yet warm, and is then to be dragg'd off in the spring. I have found this to answer well on blocks of stone fresh dug, which usually feel the effects of the weather most when first exposed.—*Correspondent of the Builder.*

NEW CHINESE ALMANACK.—The Chinese insurgents have prepared a new almanack. Amongst other things, it excludes the demonology and astrological superstition which overload other almanacks, especially those brought out in the interest of the Manchou dynasty; it makes the year begin on the 7th instead of the 4th of February; it orders the observance of one day in the week as a sabbath, but abolishes all other holidays; it solemnly adjures the people to be faithful to the insurgents' cause, and to be brave in its defence; it proclaims that Tai-ping is sent on earth by God to do God's work; it records the titles, qualities, and duties of his principal chiefs; and, finally, it divides the year into twelve months, each month being alternately either thirty or thirty-one days.

UPSALA THE IDEAL AND THE REAL.—"I had had a vision of that place," says a recent traveller, "a vision that floated before me from the far-away days of my childhood—a vision of curious, old, high-peaked, and age-blackened houses; of narrow streets, so narrow that the old houses almost met face to face; of some great old brick cathedral, speaking of piety that had made learning her handmaid; and a vast, dingy, old, curious-looking college of learning, with equally antique masters and reverend youths; of an out-of-the-world town, a seat of learning, where learning itself had grown musty and mouldy with the age of everything around its abode. And had not young Herr Pastor strengthened this vision of my geography-learning days by the three points of his thesis—namely, that Upsala was the most learned universitat i verlden; 2, Upsala was the most ancient universitat i verlden; 3, Upsala was the most northerly universitat i verlden? I do think that the idea one might form of the most learned, most ancient, and most northerly university in the world agrees well with my vision of Upsala."

"And when I went out of the hotel on a sunshiny morning, I went about and about, and said, 'Where is Upsala?' and my companion said, 'You are in it'; and I answered, 'No, I am in a clean, modern, good-looking town, of new wooden houses, painted, or coloured, in all colours, chiefly red; the streets are wide, very wide indeed; and the whole thing looks as if it had sprung up in a night, by the work of a few carpenters' hands.' There is an old orange-coloured castle, partly in ruins, up there on a great elevation, from whence you see interminably around, over one vast plain, unbroken almost by a tree; the widest, barest, most uninteresting scene I ever beheld. There is an immense brick cathedral, deformed by Swedish taste in renovation, standing in an open space: there are multitudes of men, young and middle aged, walking everywhere about with cigars or pipes in their mouths, and hideous boys' caps of white jean on their heads, and no other academic dress; whenever they get together in groups, or set out on their favourite annual tours, they sing a great deal, make much noise, and generally act rather rudely. These are the students."

"But where is the old universitat? There is no such thing to be seen, except in its living representatives—the plain-coated professors and white-capped students. Those large wooden houses, so new and modern, are the halls, and the young men lodge about as they like.

"And thus was my visionary Upsala revealed to my actual sight!

"The library is the greatest attraction, I think, at Upsala. The manuscripts amount to 5000; one of them is worth a visit here, at least from Stockholm; the Codex Argenteus is a transcript of the Gospels of the fifth century, or perhaps the earlier part of the sixth, and was not done by those, it is to be supposed, who did not esteem them; they are written in letters of silver, on vellum of a purple or a deep lilac colour; and in the Gothic, not the Latin language."

THE COAL TRADE.—To such an extent has our coal industry been developed, that at the present time not less than 37,000,000 of tons are annually raised, the value of which, at the pit's mouth, is little less than 10,000,000.; and at the places of consumption, including expenses of transport and other charges, probably not less than 20,000,000.